

Former GSA Official Pleads Guilty to Receiving Illegal Gratuity - GSA Office of Inspector General

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Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
District of Massachusetts
March 29, 2022

BOSTON – A former employee of the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) pleaded guilty today in federal court in Boston to receiving illegal gratuity.

Kevin Richards, 51, of Hanover, pleaded guilty to one count of receiving an illegal gratuity as a public official and two counts of making false statements to a federal agency. U.S. Chief District Court Judge F. Dennis Saylor IV scheduled sentencing for July 12, 2022. Richards was charged on Feb. 9, 2022.

Richards was employed as the Leasing Director for the New England Region of the Public Buildings Service, a division of GSA. Starting in 2017, Richards also worked as a licensed real estate agent for a Duxbury real estate company owned by Individual A, from whom he received real estate commissions in 2017 and 2018. Richards was permitted to have a job outside GSA provided that he disclosed it, and whether or not he received any compensation, in an annual financial disclosure report required by GSA's ethics office.

In April 2020, Richards notified Individual A about a job opening in Richards' office, substantively edited Individual A's resume and gave Individual A confidential GSA interview questions, all without telling GSA. Individual A applied for the position and was hired by Richards. Richards also recommended and obtained approval from other GSA officials for Individual A to receive an above-normal salary – \$102,517 instead of \$85,428 – and an above-normal accrual rate for annual leave. Richards did not disclose his financial relationship with Individual A.

Richards received no commissions from the Duxbury real estate company for almost two years. Then, shortly after Individual A began working for GSA, Individual A chose Richards to be a listing agent for a property in Duxbury in August 2020, and a listing agent for a different property in October 2020. Individual A paid Richards a \$10,250 commission when the second property sold.

In his GSA financial disclosure report for 2020, Richards falsely stated that he had not held any positions outside GSA that year. On Feb. 22, 2021, a GSA ethics official emailed Richards, asking whether he still had the position with the Duxbury real estate company that he had reported having in 2019. Richards falsely replied, "I did not work for them last year. I did not do any outside business last year." In fact, Richards had done work for the Duxbury real estate company in 2020 and later filed a federal tax return in which he reported a net loss of \$14,592 working for that company in 2020.

The charge of receiving an illegal gratuity as a public official provides for a sentence of up to two years in prison, one year of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. The charge of making false statements to a federal agency provides for a sentence of up to five years in prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and statutes which govern the determination of a sentence in a criminal case.

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United States Attorney Rachael S. Rollins and Joseph Dattoria, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. General Services Administration, Office of Inspector General, Boston Field Investigations Office made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Dustin Chao and Christine Wichers of Rollins' Public Corruption Unit are prosecuting the case.

Source: U.S. Attorney's Office [press release](#)